

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An imaging apparatus, comprising:
 - at least one media carrier;
- 5 an imaging position for locating the media carrier such that an imaging media supported thereon is proximate to an imaging head;
 - a storage position for storing at least one unused media carrier; and
 - a transport mechanism for moving the unused media carrier between the storage position and the imaging position.
- 10 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the media carrier is one of:
 - a cylindrical drum for loading flat media;
 - a mandrel for loading a media sleeve; or
 - a cylindrical printing element precursor.
- 15 3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the mandrel comprises a common arbor with a removable outer shell, the outer shell diameter chosen in accordance with the size of the media sleeve in use.
- 20 4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the media carrier is axially located in the imaging position by a fixed headstock on one side and a moveable tailstock on the other.
- 25 5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the transport mechanism comprises at least one holder for engaging the media carrier in the imaging position, the holder capable of moving in an axial direction to disengage the media carrier from the headstock.
- 30 6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the holder comprises a base with at least one compliant protrusion attached thereto, the compliant protrusion for engaging the media carrier.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the at least one compliant protrusion comprises a plurality of rubber rollers.
8. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the base is adapted to allow the protrusion to be positioned to accommodate different media carriers.
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9. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the holder is slideably located on a track for movement in an axial direction.
10. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the transport mechanism comprises a pair of tracks for guiding the holder between the storage position and the imaging position.
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11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the transport mechanism comprises at least one leadscrew and at least one leadscrew nut for moving the holder between the storage position and the imaging position.
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12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage position is adapted to store a plurality of unused media carriers.
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13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is adapted to store an unused media carrier in the storage position while an imaging media on another media carrier is being imaged in the imaging position.
14. A method of imaging a media comprising steps of:
25 forming an image on a first media mounted on a first media carrier located in an imaging position;
transporting the media carrier to a storage position located proximate to the imaging position;
30 loading a second media carrier in the imaging position; and

forming an image on a second media mounted on the second media carrier.

15. The method of claim 14, comprising loading the first media onto
5 the first media carrier while in the storage position.

16. The method of claim 14, comprising loading the second media onto the second media carrier while in the storage position.

10 17. The method of claim 14, comprising loading the first media onto the first media carrier while in the imaging position.

18. The method of claim 14, comprising loading the second media onto the second media carrier while in the imaging position.